A

# SERMON

PREACHED at *FULHAM*,
On *Sunday*, *Oct.* 13. 1689.

AT THE

# Consecration

Of the Right Reverend

## FATHERS in GOD,

*Edward* Lord Bishop of *Worcester*,
*Simon* Lord Bishop of *Chichester*, &
*Gilbert* Lord Bishop of *Bristol*.

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By *JOHN SCOTT*, D.D.

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*LONDON*,
Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishop's Head* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard, and *Thomas Horne*, at the South-Entrance of the *Royal-Exchange*, 1689.

# A SERMON Preached at the Conſecration OF Three BISHOPS.

JER. iii. 15.

*And I will give you Paſtors according to mine heart, who ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.*

IT is at leaſt highly probable, that of thoſe antient Prophecies which concern the Extent, and Purity, and Glory of our Saviour's Kingdom, there are ſeveral which as yet have never been accompliſhed: but that before the Conſummation of all things,

there is yet a time to come, wherein our Saviour will once more miraculouſly diſplay the Victorious Banner of the Croſs, and go forth conquering and to conquer, till he hath conſummated his Victories in a glorious Triumph over all the Powers of the Earth; wherein he will come with his Fan in his hand, and throughly purge the floor of his Church, from all that Chaff of Superſtition and Idolatry, Schiſm and Hereſy, Irreligion and Immorality, with which it is yet, and hath for many Ages, been ſpread, and almoſt covered: in the room of which, the truly antient Faith, the ſincere Piety, the unaffected Vertue, the open, generous, and unbounded Charity, which Chriſtianity teaches and preſcribes, will be the univerſal Livery and cognizance of the Chriſtian World; and as an Introduction to this glorious ſtate of things, it is foretold, that God will raiſe up in his Church, a great many Paſtors and Teachers, eminent for Learning and Wiſdom, Piety and Virtue, who by the efficacy of their Doctrine, the ſanctity of their Lives, the prudence of their Conduct, & the unweari[ed] activity of their zeal for God, and the good of Souls, will greatly contribute to this glorious work of the Converſion of the Heathen, and

the Reformation of the Chriſtian World; for this God promiſes in the Text, *And I will give you Paſtors after my own heart*, &c. And that this Promiſe refers to this future glorious ſtate of the Church is evident: for it is made to the Jews upon their reſtoration from their laſt and great diſperſion, as you may ſee from *v.* 12. to the Text, which reſtoration of theirs, the Scripture repreſents as the opening and introduction of this glorious face of things.

Before we proceed to the main Argument of the Text, it will be neceſſary to inquire, who are here meant by Paſtors? Paſtors properly ſignify Feeders of Flocks and Herds of Beaſts, and more particularly Shepherds or Feeders of Flocks of Sheep; and theſe the Scripture uſually expreſſes by the Hebrew *Rogim*, which generally ſignifies Paſtors of Beaſts, but metaphorically it ſignifies Rulers and Teachers of Men, who in Scripture are moſt commonly expreſſed by the Hebrew *Parnaſin*, which is the word in the Text. For thus in Scripture, not only God himſelf, the Ruler and Teacher of the World, not only Jeſus Chriſt the great King and Prophet under God the Father, but Kings alſo who are God's Vicegerents, are frequently ſtiled Paſtors and Shepherds; in which

laſt ſenſe, ſundry Expoſitors will have the word underſtood in the Text, *I will give 'em Kings and Princes according to my own heart.* But beſides Kings, this Title in Scripture is frequently given to Spiritual Rulers and Teachers, thus, Iſay lvi. 10, 11. the *blind and ignorant Watchmen*, by which all Expoſitors underſtand the Eccleſiaſtick Governours and Teachers, are called *dumb dogs, and ſhepherds that cannot underſtand.* So alſo Jer. l. 6. *My people have been loſt ſheep, their ſhepherds have cauſed 'em to go aſtray, i. e.* Their Prophets and Teachers have miſguided 'em, and ſo in ſundry other places. And in the New Teſtament the very office of Biſhops and Teachers, is frequently deſcribed by feeding the Flock of Chriſt; and the Apoſtle, enumerating the ſeveral Orders of Miniſters which Chriſt had inſtituted in his Church, mentions among 'em *Paſtors and Teachers*, Eph. iv. 11. which Title of Paſtors ſeems to have been derived from the Jewiſh Synagogue, in which there were three *Parnaſim*, or Paſtors, whoſe office it was to Rule and Teach, to adminiſter Juſtice to the People, and to inſtruct 'em in the Law; and accordingly, by Paſtors all Chriſtian Antiquity underſtands Biſhops and ſpiritual Guides and Teachers, who in all Eccleſiaſtical

cleſiaſtical Writings are frequently dignified with this ſtile of Paſtors: and in this latter ſenſe, *viz.* of Eccleſiaſtical Rulers and Teachers, I conceive the word Paſtors is more peculiarly meant in the Text; where it is ſaid, that theſe Paſtors ſhould *feed 'em with Knowledge and Underſtanding*, that is, according to the moſt natural ſignification of the words, ſhall inſtruct you in the true knowledge of God, and of Religion, according to that of Mal. ii. 7. *The Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts.* Though I confeſs, the words may import no more than ----- *who ſhall rule you with Prudence and Diſcretion*; as it is ſaid of David, *That he fed the people of Iſrael according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them with the skillfulneſs of his hand*, Pſal. lxxviii. 72. But this latter ſenſe being more forced and critical, we ought, according to the moſt known rules of interpretation, to prefer the former, which is moſt natural; and then by *Paſtors* here, muſt be underſtood the ſpiritual Rulers and Teachers, *viz.* the Biſhops and Presbyters of the Church, whoſe peculiar office it is to teach and inſtruct the People, in the Knowledge of God and of Religion. So then, that which

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God here Promiſes is this, That he will very much advance and raiſe the ſtate of his Church in the latter days: for ſo *v.* 16, 17, 18. *In thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, they ſhall ſay no more, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; neither ſhall it come to mind; neither ſhall they remember it; neither ſhall they viſit it; neither ſhall that be done any more.* For then ſhall their Ceremonial worſhip be utterly aboliſhed, of which the Ark of the Covenant was a principal part; and they that worſhip ſhall worſhip in ſpirit and in truth. And then he tells 'em, *at that time they ſhall call Jeruſalem the Throne of the Lord, and all the Nations ſhall be gathered unto it, in the name of the Lord to Jeruſalem; neither ſhall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart: and in thoſe days the houſe of Judah ſhall walk with the houſe of Iſrael, and they ſhall come together out of the Land of the North, to the land that I have given for an inheritance to their Fathers.* Which glorious things, being yet for the moſt part unaccompliſhed, muſt be reſerved for future Ages: and in Order to the introduction of this glorious ſtate of things, God promiſes that he will give 'em ſpiritual Guides, and Paſtors after his own heart, *&c.*

The words, thus explained, neceſſarily import this Propoſition, which ſhall be the ſubject of the enſuing Diſcourſe; That

*That ſuch ſpiritual Guides and Paſtors as are according to God's own heart, do very much conduce to the glory, and beauty, and perfection of the Church.* In proſecution of which Argument, I ſhall endeavour

I. To ſhew what thoſe qualifications are which render Men Paſtors according to God's own heart.

II. In what reſpects Paſtors ſo qualified, do conduce to the glory, and beauty, and perfection of the Church.

I. *Firſt*, We will ſhew, What thoſe Qualifications are which render Men Paſtors after God's own heart. For God doth not approve or diſapprove of Men in any ſtate or capacity out of a fond reſpect or partiality to their Perſon; Perſons, as ſuch, are all alike, and indifferent to him: and it is only their Qualifications that do diſtinguiſh 'em in his eſteem and affection. Now there are theſe three Qualifications neceſſary to render Men Paſtors after God's own heart:

*Firſt*, Their being ſent and commiſſioned by God.

*Secondly*, Their being throughly inſtructed in the knowledge of God's mind and will.

*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, Their being exemplary in their Converſation of the goodneſs and purity of their own Doctrine.

*Firſt*, To qualify Men for being Paſtors after God's own heart, it's neceſſary that they be ſent and commiſſioned by him. For ſuch as are God's Paſtors, do act in God's ſtead, and are his ſpiritual Vicegerents in the Church: and hence they are ſaid to *pray men in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. v. 20. And as Chriſt is ſtiled the ſupream Shepherd under God the Sovereign Paſtor of the Church; ſo they under Chriſt are ſtiled *the Overſeers and Shepherds in the flock, to feed the Church of God*, Acts xx. 28. and their office is *to feed the flock of God, and to take the overſight thereof*, 1 Pet. v. 2. and as Chriſt was his Father's Embaſſador to the World, ſo they are ſtiled *the Embaſſadors of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. v. 20. and ſeeing by their office they act in the ſtead of Chriſt, as Chriſt doth in the ſtead of God, and are his ſpiritual Proxies and Subſtitutes in his Kingdom; it is neceſſary they ſhould be commiſſioned by him: otherwiſe inſtead of being his Under-Shepherds, they are Thieves that break into his Fold, and there uſurp his Power and Authority. And accordingly you find, that in the very ſame ſenſe

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that Chriſt was ſent from the Father, that is, as his Authoriſed and Commiſſioned Miniſter, to act for him, and in his ſtead. Theſe Under-Paſtors of his Flock were ſent from Chriſt; *as the Father ſent me*, ſaith he, *ſo ſend I you*; that is, as my Commiſſioned Miniſters, to act for me and in my ſtead, *John* xx. 21. And to ſhew, that this was the intention of his ſending 'em, he tells 'em, *he that heareth you, heareth me*, becauſe you ſpeak from me, and I by you; *and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*; *and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me*; becauſe you by vertue of this my Miſſion repreſent me, even as I by vertue of my Father's Miſſion repreſent him, *Luke* x. 16. And as he ſent 'em to act in his ſtead, and by his authority, ſo in ſending 'em he transferred upon 'em all the powers of his own Miſſion from the Father, in which is included the ſame Authority to ſend others, that he had to ſend them, that ſo they might derive their Miſſion to others, as he did his to them, through all ſucceeding Generations. For unleſs by ſending them he gave 'em the ſame authority to propagate their Miſſion to others, as his Father gave him to propagate his Miſſion to them; how could he truly ſay, that he ſent them as his Father ſent him, ſince he muſt have

ſent 'em without that very authority from his Father, by vertue of which he ſent them? And this it's plain, the Apoſtles did believe was included in their Commiſſion, ſeeing without any other authority, at leaſt that we know of, they afterwards proceeded to ordain and commiſſion others; and thereby to impower them ſtill to derive the ſame commiſſion to others, and ſo on in a continued ſucceſſion to the end of the World, as is evident by innumerable inſtances in the New Teſtament, and eſpecially in thoſe two famous ones of *Timothy* and *Titus*, the firſt Biſhops of *Epheſus* and *Creet*. Thus Chriſt ordained the Apoſtles, the Apoſtles ordained the firſt Biſhops, and theſe ordained their Colegues and Succeſſors; and ſo through the Epiſcopal hands have the Holy Orders been all along derived, in a continued Succeſſion, from one Generation to another, as is notorious, not only from all Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, but even from St. *Jerom* himſelf, who though he ſometimes, out of a particular pique, indeavours to level Biſhops with Presbyters, is yet fain to do it with an *Excepta Ordinatione*. Seeing therefore our Saviour hath thus intailed his Miſſion from God upon all ſucceeding Paſtors of the Church, and taken

Ep. ad Evagr.

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ſuch care to conſign it down to all future Ages: I think it is a plain caſe, that they who intrude themſelves into the Paſtoral Office without it, at leaſt where it may be had, are ſo far from being Paſtors after God's own heart, that he looks upon 'em as ſo many lawleſs Uſurpers and Invaders of his Authority.

*Secondly*, To qualify Men for being Paſtors after God's own heart, it's neceſſary that they ſhould be throughly inſtructed in the knowledge of God's Mind and Will; for their Office is to be Guides of Souls, and how ſhould they be Guides to others, who know not the way themſelves? *If the blind lead the blind*, ſaith our Saviour, *both ſhall fall into the ditch*; and accordingly God charges the ruine of his people upon the Ignorance of the Prieſts, for which he threatens to reject 'em; *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge: becauſe thou haſt rejected knowledge I will reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no Prieſt to me*, Hoſ. iii. 6. And 'tis a dreadful charge he gives againſt the ignorant Prieſts of *Iſrael*, *his watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot bark, ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber, and they are ſhepherds that cannot underſtand*, Iſay lvi. 10, 11. But as for the Paſtors after God's own heart, a main part of

their Character, according to St. *Paul* is, that they be *apt* or fit *to teach*, which they cannot be till they himſelves be firſt taught and inſtructed, 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. 'Tis true indeed, when the Goſpel lay hid in the eternal Councils of God, it was neceſſary that he ſhould immediately reveal it to the minds of thoſe who were to declare it to the World; otherwiſe it is impoſſible it ſhould ever have been known to Mankind. But when once he had fully revealed it to them, and declared it by 'em, and had tranſmitted their Declaration by a ſtanding Scripture to all ſucceeding Generations; to what end ſhould he ſtill proceed to make new Revelations, unleſs it be ſuppoſed, either that he had not ſufficiently revealed his Goſpel to them, or that he hath ſtill ſome new Goſpel to reveal? For otherwiſe to continue immediate Revelation, would be only *actum agere*, to multiply actions to no purpoſe, unleſs it were to gratify Mens ſloth and idleneſs, and excuſe 'em from the trouble of ſearching and ſtudying the Scripture, in which he hath ſufficiently tranſmitted his mind and will to the World. But though God will never be wanting to Mankind in any neceſſary aſſiſtance; yet when once he hath put things within our own power, he

he expects we ſhould do 'em, and not ſit ſtill with our hands in our Pockets, expecting that he ſhould do 'em for us. Since therefore by tranſmitting to us the Scripture, he hath put it within the power of the Paſtors of the Church to underſtand and teach his mind and will; he expects they ſhould exerciſe that power in a diligent ſtudy of thoſe things which lead to the underſtanding of it, and not depend upon new Revelations, for the underſtanding of thoſe things which are already ſufficiently revealed. For thus, till the Old Teſtament was finiſhed, God continued the Spirit of Prophecy in the Jewiſh Church, after which he immediately withdrew it, and wholly remitted his people to the conduct of the Prieſts and Levites, who in their 48. Cities, which were ſo many Univerſities for their Education in divine learning, diligently read and ſtudied the Law, and thereby accompliſhed themſelves to preach and explain it to the people. And in like manner God continued the ſame Spirit of Prophecy in the Chriſtian Church till the New Teſtament was revealed and written, and Copies of it diſperſed through all the Churches, and from thenceforth the Spirit of Prophecy ceaſed, and in the room of its firſt inſpired Miniſters, there ſucceeded

ceeded an ordinary ſtanding Miniſtry, who by their learning, and induſtry, and diligent ſearch of Scripture, were to ſupply the defect of immediate Revelation, and to qualify themſelves to teach and inſtruct the ſeveral Flocks committed to their charge: in order whereunto, a very large Compaſs of Knowledge is required; it being not ſufficient for 'em, ſimply to know and underſtand the ſeveral Articles and Propoſitions of Religion: but they muſt alſo be able to deduce from 'em their juſt and natural inferences, and be furniſhed with proper Mediums to aſſert and prove 'em, and with ſtrong and powerful perſwaſions, to preſs and inforce 'em upon the Minds and Conſciences of the People. For which end it's neceſſary, that they ſhould be inſtructed, not only in the art of reaſoning, but alſo in natural and revealed Theology, and in moral Philoſophy, that ſo they may be able to explain the particular Offices of Piety and Divine Worſhip, and the natures of the particular Vertues and Vices they exhort to, and dehort from, and to enforce 'em with the Eternal Reaſons of Good and Evil: but above all it's neceſſary, that they ſhould be well acquainted with the Holy Scripture, that great Oracle of Truth, which from God's

God's own Mouth declares his Will to the World: and that in order to this, they ſhould be competently Skilled in the Original Languages, in the Hiſtory, and Rights and Cuſtoms of the Ages wherein they were writ. And ſeeing it is the Paſtor's Office, not only to propound, but alſo to aſſert and maintain the holy truths of Religion, (which through the vaſt multiplication of Errors and Herefies, are, and have always been, very hardly beſet) to accompliſh him for this part of his office; it's highly requiſite that he ſhould be well acquainted with the true ſtates of Controverſies, with the Hiſtory of Chriſtian Theology, and of the riſe and progreſs of the ſeveral Errors and Hereſies with which it hath always been oppoſed, ſo as to be able to trace up thoſe poiſonous ſtreams to their Fountain Heads. I do not ſay that all theſe things are abſolutely neceſſary to render Men Paſtors after God's own heart: for I make no doubt but a good Man that throughly underſtands his Religion, may with a little learning do a great deal of good, and be able at laſt to render a comfortable account of the charge committed to him. But certainly to render a Man a Paſtor accompliſht at all points, and for all parts of his office, requires a very

very large and comprehenſive Knowledge.

*Thirdly* and *laſtly*, To qualifie Men for being Paſtors after God's own heart, it's neceſſary that they ſhould be exemplary in their Converſations of the goodneſs and purity of their own Doctrine: and indeed this is ſo neceſſary, that without it the two former are of little ſignificancy in the eſteem of God; 'tis this alone indears the Man to God: and how well ſoever he may be authoriſed to his Office, or accompliſhed in his intellectuals, unleſs the Man be approved of God, the Paſtor can never be according to God's own heart. And indeed a good Life is ſo neceſſary to qualify Men for the Paſtoral Office, that without it it's hardly conceivable how they can ever be ſucceſsful in the diſcharge of it. For the generality of the people underſtand with their Eyes, and believe with their Senſes; if they ſee us live as if we believed our own Doctrine, they will believe it too: but if not, they will be apt to conclude, that we ſee no ground to believe what we teach 'em; and from thence to infer, that there is none, ſeeing if there were, one would think it is impoſſible, but we whoſe buſineſs it is to ſtudy Religion, ſhould eaſily ſee and find it. Thus when Paſtors openly contradict in their

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Lives, what they teach with their Mouths, they thereby unteach their own Doctrine, and in effect tell their People, it is all an ungrounded impoſture; and that even Religion it ſelf, how zealouſly ſoever they ſeem to contend for it, is in their opinion a meer Caſtle in the air, that hath no foundation, but only in the invention of Knaves, and in the faith of Fools. Thus when the vulgar behold Religion proſtituted, by the Hypocritical Profeſſors of it, to baſe and unworthy ends, this ſhocks their Faith more than a thouſand Atheiſtical Reaſons. They have ſeen ſhrewd and crafty Men uſe their Religion as Juglers do their Boxes, for no other end but only to play tricks with it, and delude and coſen the ſimple and well meaning: and hence they firſt ſuſpect, and at laſt conclude, That it is only a politick device contrived for ſecular ends and purpoſes. Of the truth of which the Age we live in is a ſorrowful inſtance: for to ſcorn and deſpiſe Religion, is now no longer the Prerogative of Wits and Gallants; but the infection is ſpread and propagated into Shops and Stalls, and even among the Rabble there are Apoſtles of Atheiſm and Impiety: and whence ſhould this proceed? Is it to be ſuppoſed, that ſuch as theſe Philoſopize themſelves

into Infidelity? that these found their Atheistical Principles upon the sage Hypotheses, either of *Epicurus*, or *Aristotle*? O, no, their argument lies near home, and more open to their Capacities; they have seen a World of base tricks plaid under Religious disguises, which tempts 'em to conclude, that Religion it self is nothing but a trick and disguise: But when they see those who are the Ministers of Religion, live in a direct opposition to those very Laws of it which they themselves prescribe and teach, the most natural inference they can make of it is, That they minister to Religion for no other end but to make their Fortunes, and gain a good subsistance by it; and consequently, that they look upon Religion it self as nothing but a secular Trade. And while we give the people such reason to suspect that we do not believe our own Doctrine, how can we expect that they should believe it, who are far less capable to judge of the reason and evidence upon which it is founded? Wherefore it was not without very great reason, that St. *Paul* exhorts his Son *Timothy to be an Example to the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity*, 1 Tim. iii. 12. where you have the particulars, in which

which more eſpecially Paſtors ought to be Examples to others. 1. *In Word.* 2. *In Converſation.* 3. *In Charity.* 4. *In Faith.* 5. *In Spirit.* 6. *In Purity.* Of each of which I ſhall diſcourſe very briefly.

1. In *Word*, that is, as I conceive, in obſerving a decent gravity in diſcourſe; for juſt before the Apoſtle had adviſed him ſo to behave himſelf, as that no Man might deſpiſe his Youth: and in order to that, that firſt of all he ſhould be exemplary in word, that is, that his diſcourſe ſhould not be as young Mens uſe to be, vain, or light, or ſcurrilous, or prophane; but that it ſhould be well poiſed between the vicious extreams, ſo as neither on the one hand, to be over youthful, gay and frolick; nor on the other, to be ſour and morſe, ſtarcht and formal: which latter though it may take with leſs diſcerning people, will render a Man ſuſpected, by thoſe who look farther than the outſide, either of great emptineſs, or vile Hypocriſy: whereas a decent openneſs and freedom of Diſcourſe, mingled with ſeriouſneſs, gives it both Charm and Authority, by which it profits and delights together, and entertains the Mind with a chearful Edification. So that by obſerving a decent gravity in

our diſcourſe, we ſtamp a graceful majeſty upon what we ſay, which at once pleaſes, inſtructs, and aws thoſe that hear us.

2. In *Converſation*, which *Grotius* renders in a ſweet and obliging deportment, to carry our ſelves at an equal diſtance, from contempt and haughtineſs on the one hand, and ſneaking and glavering on the other; both which, in the judgment of all diſcerning Men, render us equally mean and contemptible. For to contemn another, is to behave ones ſelf above ones ſelf: and to ſneak to another, is to behave ones ſelf beneath ones ſelf: and for a Prince to cringe, or for a Peaſant to inſult, are equally ridiculous. But he who in his Converſation obſerves a juſt equality, (ſo as neither to be too aſſuming, nor too proſtrate; that treats his inferiours and equals courteouſly and affably; and his ſuperiours and equals with a modeſt freedom and aſſurance) ſhews himſelf both a wiſe, and an humble Man, that underſtands the juſt value both of himſelf and others; and by ſuch a juſt demeanour, he can hardly fail of obliging all he converſes with; but only ſuch, as either undervalue him, or over-value themſelves.

3. In *Charity*, that is, in an hearty good

good will and forward beneficence to all Men, as we have opportunity; in being ready to ſupply 'em in their neceſſities, to counſel 'em in their difficulties, to aſſiſt 'em in their juſt pretenſions, to put fair interpretations on their actions, to bear with their pitiable prejudices, to make juſt allowances for their infirmities, to pitty their follies and miſcarriages, and uſe all gentle means to reclaim 'em; to be long-ſuffering under their provocations, and gentle and eaſy to be intreated: theſe are the great acts of Charity, in which Paſtors ought to be exemplary to the people; and by being ſo, they will take the moſt effectual courſe, not only to propagate this excellent grace to others, which includes the one half of Religion: but alſo to erect themſelves a ſure Empire in the hearts of their People; by which powerful intereſt, they will be much more effectually inabled to ſubdue 'em to the obedience of the Goſpel, which is the great end of their profeſſion.

4. In *Spirit*, that is, in an active and ſprightful zeal for the glory of God, and the good of Souls; ſuch as renders 'em induſtrious in their Paſtoral Office, in feeding, governing and inſtructing the Flocks committed to their Charge. For certainly, if for Men to be

be diligent in their Callings, be a part of their Religion; for Paſtors to be diligent in theirs is a main part of their Religion; there being no Calling in the World wherein Religion is ſo nearly concerned, and upon which Religion lays ſo much ſtreſs, and charges ſo ſevere an account. For ſo St. *Paul* tells us, that the Paſtor's Office is *to watch for the Souls of Men*; and that his Charge is *to give an account of 'em*, *Heb.* xiii. 17. And certainly, he whoſe Office it is to watch over ſo rich a Treaſure, as the Souls of Men, and whoſe burthen is to give an account, at his own eternal peril, for all that are loſt through his negligence, had need be very active and diligent, in the diſcharge of ſo vaſt and dangerous a truſt.

5. In *Faith*, that is, as I ſuppoſe, in an immoveable Conſtancy and Fidelity to our Religion, in holding faſt the form of ſound words, and contending earneſtly for the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints; not enduring either to be huſt or wheedled out of the profeſſion of truth. For as Chriſtians, we take up our Religion, with this condition, to die for it, rather than to part with it; but as Chriſtian Paſtors, Chriſtianity it ſelf is more peculiarly recommended to our care, to be preſerved intire and inviolable;

lable; and as ſuch, to be handed down, by us, to the Generations to come. So 1 *Tim.* vi. 20. *O Timothy, keep that which was committed to thy truſt*; which elſewhere he thus expreſſes, *hold faſt the form of ſound words*, or the true Chriſtian Faith committed to thy charge, 2 *Tim.* i. 13. and in order to his ſo doing, he charges him not only to be careful to preſerve it himſelf; but alſo *to commit it to faithful Men*, that is, to faithful Paſtors, *who ſhould be careful to teach it to others alſo*, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. Thus God delivered in truſt his holy mind and will to the Primitive Paſtors, by them to be handed down intire and pure to their Succeſſors; and ſo on through all ſucceeding Generations: and becauſe he foreſaw, that it would neceſſarily contract ſoil and corruption, by being delivered down through ſo many impure hands, therefore he hath bequeathed to us the holy Scripture for a ſtanding rule, whereby each ſucceeding Generation might be able to reform the profeſſion of it, from the errors and corruptions which it ſhould contract in its paſſage down from the Generations before 'em. And thus hath Chriſtianity been derived down to us of this Generation. *viz.* By the conſtant and couragious Profeſſion of all the preceding Paſtors

ſtors of the Church, regularly reformed by the Rule of Scripture, from the Corruptions it had contracted in its deſcent through the Ages before us. And as we owe our Chriſtianity to the conſtant Profeſſion of preceding Paſtors, many of whom have ſent it down to us, Sealed with their Blood; ſo we owe the delivery of it, by our conſtant Profeſſion of it, down to ſucceeding Generations: in which if we fail, we are not only falſe and perfidious to the moſt ſacred truſt that ever was committed to Men, but ſo far as in us lies, we ſtop the Current of our holy Religion down to ſucceeding Ages, and do our beſt endeavours to intercept this Heavenly Light, which hath ſhone down to us from our Predeceſſors, from ſhining down from us upon our Succeſſors.

6. And laſtly, Another Excellency wherein Paſtors are to be exemplary is, in *Purity*, that is, in abſtaining from all fleſhly Luſts, from Worldly Mindedneſs, Intemperance and Wantonneſs: for the great deſign of the Religion we teach is, to abſtract and wean Men from ſenſe and ſenſual Injoyments, that thereupon they may acquire a ſincere reliſh of divine and ſpiritual goods, which are the great Entertainments upon which they muſt live for ever; that

that ſo, when they leave this World of ſenſual things, they may carry hence with 'em ſuch grateful preſenſions, and foretaſts of the joys and pleaſures of the ſpiritual World, as to be able to live contented with, and happy upon 'em to Eternal Ages. And this being the great deſign of the Religion we profeſs and teach, we are peculiarly concerned to teach it by our Example, as well as by our Doctrine; otherwiſe 'twill be thought by thoſe that hear us, that we perſwade them to a Spiritual Life, for no other end, but only to get the Monopoly of ſenſual Injoyments to our ſelves. Wherefore in order to the advancing this great deſign of our Religion, it's neceſſary, that by purifying our ſelves from ſenſual Luſts, and by the Example of our heavenly mindedneſs, we ſhould indeavour to convince ourPeople, That we do not place our Happineſs in the gratifications of our Senſe; but that we look upon our ſelves as born to higher Hopes, and that our great Expectation is beyond the Grave.

Having thus diſpatched the firſt thing I propoſed, which was to ſhew, What or who thoſe Paſtors are that are according to God's own heart; I ſhall touch very briefly upon the ſecond, *viz.*

II. How much ſuch Paſtors do conduce to the Glory, and Beauty, and perfection of the Church. In ſhort, the Glory and Perfection of a Church as ſuch, principally conſiſts in the following particulars: Firſt, In ſoundneſs of Faith. Secondly, In Purity of Worſhip. Thirdly, In vigour of Diſcipline. Fourthly, In unity of Communion and Affection. Fifthly, In ſanctity of Manners. To all which, ſuch Paſtors as are according to God's own heart, do very greatly conduce.

Firſt, In ſoundneſs of Faith, to which there is nothing can more conduce, than Pious and Learned Paſtors; who being not only purged from thoſe vicious Affections, which are wont to ſeduce Men into Errors and Hereſies; and not only inſpired with an hearty zeal for Truth, but alſo accompliſhed with Parts and Learning to diſtinguiſh between Truth and Falſhood, and to ſeparate the Innovations of falſe Teachers from the antient truths of Chriſtianity, cannot but be highly inſtrumental to the reſtoring the Faith of their Churches, whereever they find it corrupted and ſophiſticated, to its Primitive Luſtre and Simplicity.

Secondly, In purity of Worſhip; for the end

end of all Church-Aſſemblies being to worſhip God, and the worſhip of God conſiſting in a devout acknowledgment of the infinite perfections of his nature, by ſuch internal and external acts, as right, reaſon and revelation directs: to be ſure all ſuch as are truly devout, and ſincerely affected with the Divine Perfections, muſt look upon themſelves, as greatly concerned to worſhip God, in ſuch manner as is moſt ſuitable to his Will and Nature; that ſo inſtead of making an honourable acknowledgment of his perfections in their worſhip, they may not ſeem to ridicule and diſgrace 'em. And this the Paſtors of the Church are more peculiarly concerned in, who being the Guides and Directors of the publick Worſhip, muſt, if they are truly Pious, be very jealous of the worſhip of God, to ſee it maintained in, or reſtored to its Primitive Purity and Perfection: and conſequently, if they are Judicious as well as Pious, and can diſtinguiſh between true Worſhip and falſe, to be ſure where they find it true and pure, they will uſe their utmoſt endeavour to preſerve it ſo; and take all poſſible care, that it be neither defaced with Superſtition, nor blended with Idolatry for the future: and where they

find it hath contracted ruſt and corruption, will be no leſs ſollicitous to reſtore it to its native luſtre.

Thirdly, A Churches Glory and Perfection conſiſts alſo in the vigour of its Diſcipline, in the juſt and vigilant Adminiſtration of the Power of the Keys, in admoniſhing ſuch as go aſtray, in excluding 'em the Communion of the Church if they continue obſtinate, and re-admitting 'em upon their Repentance; which Power our Saviour committed to the hands of his Apoſtles, and was from them derived to the Biſhops their Succeſſors, as a Spiritual Rod, to chaſtize and reduce thoſe ſtragling Sheep of their Flocks, upon whom the gentler methods of Religion ſhould prove ineffectual: and in thoſe purer Ages of the Church, wherein this Power was maintained in its due and regular exerciſe, and it was not proſtituted to ſerve humane paſſions and ſecular ends, it very rarely failed of its deſigned effect. And to this day in the Greek Church, where the ſpiritual Cenſures are adminiſtred, though with great Corruption by thoſe in whoſe hands our Saviour and his Apoſtles depoſited it; there is no corporal Coercion whatſoever ſo tremendous to the People as that of Excommunication, and

and this not without juſt reaſon. For if Men have any reverence for the authority of Chriſt, or any dread of his Tribunal; doubtleſs to be juſtly excluded from his Kingdom upon Earth, and from the Priviledges and Communities thereof, by thoſe whom he himſelf hath impowred to exclude, muſt in their eſteem be the next degree of puniſhment to their being actually excluded from his Kingdom in Heaven. Whenever therefore this Power falls into the hands of ſuch Biſhops and Paſtors, as do not only apparently derive it in a lineal Succeſſion from our Saviour, but will alſo take care to adminiſter it with Prudence, Equity, and Juſtice; the dread of it muſt needs be a mighty influence upon the Lives of all ſuch Chriſtians as have any regard to the Authority of God, and our Saviour.

Fourthly, A Churches Glory and Perfection conſiſts in unity of Communion and affections, ſo that there be no Schiſms in the Body, but that all its Members being incorporate in the ſame Communion, be knit and faſtned to one another by the ligaments of mutual Love and Charity; to which excellent effect, there is nothing in the World can more conduce, than Learned, Prudent, and Pious Paſtors;

who

who by wisely stating the different Opinions upon which Men divide, will set 'em nearer together, and in many Cases reduce the Controversie to a meer quarrel about words; who by prudent expedients will so adjust and temper the different interests of differing Parties, as to render them fairly consistent; who by the gravity of their discourse, and the integrity and obligingness of their behaviour, cannot fail to wind themselves into the esteem and affections of both Parties; whereby they will be the better inabled to sweeten and influence their mutual animosities, and to reduce 'em to a better understanding of one another. In a word, who by their gentleness to the froward and peevish, their condescention to the innocently prejudiced, and their honest moderation to all, will be continually pouring a soft and healing Balm into the bleeding Wounds of their Churches; and if it be possible, so effectually mediate between the divided Parties, as at length to unite 'em in the same Communion, and cement their divided hearts and affections.

Fifthly and lastly, The Glory and Perfection of a Church consists also in sanctity of Manners; to promote which also, nothing

can

can be more conducive than Pastors according to God's own heart. For first, their being Commissioned from God, in a continued visible Succession from our Saviour, to teach and govern his Flock; must give their Doctrine a very great authority in the minds of all that have any reverence for God, and thereby render it more prevalent and effectual: and then their Doctrine, supposing they are Pious and Learned, will be throughout holy, and in all points tending to promote the interest of Piety and Vertue; and above all, their holy Doctrine will be backt and inforc'd by their holy Examples, which will preach more effectually than their Tongues. For whereas Precepts and Discourses of Vertue, are only the dead Pictures, and artificial Landskips and descriptions of it; a vertuous Example is Vertue it self informed and animated, alive and in motion, exerting and exhibiting it self before our Eyes in all its natural Charms and Graces. And therefore as we know a Man much better when we see him alive and in action, than when we only see his Picture: so Vertue and Piety are much better understood, and better loved by Men when they see 'em living and acting in holy Examples, than when they only hear

hear 'em deſcribed and Pictured in vertuous Precepts and Diſcourſes. When therefore their Paſtoral Authority, their Doctrine and Example, ſhall all conſpire to advance the Intereſt of Piety and Vertue in the World; to be ſure they muſt have a powerful influence upon the Lives and Manners of Men.

What then remains but that you, the Right Reverend and Reverend Paſtors of the Church, in whoſe Power it is to do ſuch a World of good, make it your great indeavour to approve your ſelves Paſtors according to God's own heart. Bleſſed be God, our Church hath hitherto abounded with ſuch Paſtors as have not only been ſent forth by Biſhops, who in an uninterrupted Succeſſion have derived their Authority to ſend 'em from the Apoſtles, as they did theirs from our Saviour (and hitherto God be praiſed our Church hath known no other) but have alſo been as Renowned for their Learning and profound Science in Religion, and as conſpicuous Examples of true ſubſtantial Piety and Vertue, as any that any Church in the World can boaſt of: and by the great earneſt he hath this day given us of his kind Intentions for the future, we have incouragement to hope that he will not only continue, but multiply 'em, and ſtill

more

more and more improve the glory of our Church, by giving her more and more Pastors after his own heart; that so under their wise and pious Conduct, she may not only continue what she is, *viz.* by many degrees the best and purest Church in the World; but may still increase in Strength, and Beauty and Perfection; and that she that hath born the shock of so many Angry Storms, may still stand firm, like a Rock of Adamant, against the noisy Billows that are driven against her, and still force 'em to retire in empty foam and fury, till by their vain attempts they have wearied themselves into smaller Waves, and are at last composed into a Calm. For which end Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this World may be so ordered by thy Governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all Godly Quietness through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*FINIS.*

FINIS.

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